

Case Study:

Discover how Sterling Pharma Solutions' approach to careers outreach activity is seeking to inspire the next generation of technical talent.

Sterling Pharma Solutions has a proven track record of providing a range of complementary services spanning the entire pharmaceutical lifecycle, from early stage discovery to full commercial roll-out. Rebecca Middleton, Learning & Development Business Partner, explains how Sterling take a long term approach to skills planning with their own careers outreach activity.

Tell us about your careers outreach programme?

At Sterling we understand how vital it is to provide the information and opportunities young people need to inspire and enable them to properly consider a career in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM). Our commitment to supporting young people into STEM careers is evident across all levels of our organisation, from our employees who act as STEM advocates; going into schools to educate and then answer questions young people have about a career in the pharmaceutical industry, to our executive team who actively encourage provision of early career opportunities.

As part of our outreach activity we provide resources to schools, colleges and universities, and support activities which encourage young people to consider STEM careers. This is often backed by key partners such as the North East LEP, the Science Industry Partnership and North East Ambassador Network.

We provide work experience opportunities and a chance to shadow our experts to local school students exploring their next steps, and our apprentices are actively involved in our careers outreach activities, providing case studies and attending events to promote their chosen career path and their experiences.

The Sterling logo features the word "Sterling" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a graphic consisting of three interconnected hexagons: one blue and two green.

In addition, we provide work placements to university students, giving them the chance to gain practical experience within the industry and apply the knowledge they have gained during their studies. We work with several universities across the globe to promote our career opportunities amongst soon-to-be graduates; enabling them to break into the industry and gain vital experience. Our Knowledge Transfer Partnerships with local universities also enable us to promote and provide opportunities to PhD students who require industrial placements to allow them to conduct their research within a real-working environment.

Given the industry that we operate in, our career opportunities extend far beyond STEM. We offer opportunities within a variety of disciplines, from business administration and marketing to finance and health and safety. Part of our outreach work includes reaching out to those who are going into careers other than STEM, and promoting similar work experience, apprenticeship and graduate opportunities to those interested in a career within the fast-paced and ever-evolving pharmaceutical industry.

How did you find the training for the SIP Ambassador programme?

The SIP Ambassador training was incredibly useful from a networking point of view, as it allowed me to get a feel for what other companies were planning with regards to careers outreach. It also gave me the opportunity to collaborate with those from other organisations, which enabled us to support each other throughout the training. The SIP Ambassador online resources are highly practical and relevant, and can be easily applied in a school environment.



Sterling Pharma staff hosting a virtual Careers Fair

What are the highlights of your outreach activity so far?

Our outreach work is ongoing and during this year alone we have supported 26 different projects. We think that it is particularly important to highlight the various routes available for a young person considering a career in pharmaceuticals, research development and manufacturing; including both the traditional university approach, as well as the apprenticeship route.

We are proud that all our apprentices are offered a full-time role at Sterling once they have progressed through our apprenticeship programme. Similarly, we also offer graduate placements to help university students break into the industry, gaining the necessary expertise and work experience. We hope to share positive stories and opportunities that encourage young people to consider a career in science, and science related professions, regardless of the academic route they have chosen.

“ We would now like to make the SIP Ambassador Programme a key part of the training process for our new apprentices starting in September, which will allow us to build on the pool of people that can help support our outreach work at schools and colleges. I feel confident that they would all be able to deliver sessions independently using the training and content provided in the programme. ”

The SIP Ambassador Programme

SIP Members can join a network of industry professionals who inspire and enthuse young people into careers within the science-based industries. The SIP Ambassador Programme is a careers outreach programme in which our Ambassadors engage with young people, and educators to promote STEM based careers through visits to schools and colleges, attendance at careers fairs and by supporting industry visits. SIP Ambassador training gives your workforce the skills, expertise and resources to enthuse young people and provide a unique insight into the world of work.



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